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LEWINS, Robert

The Editor of the Edinr. Review from
the Author

On Medical Reform,

by

Lucius.

1845

22

REMARKS

ON

MEDICAL REFORM,

AND ON

SIR JAMES GRAHAM'S MEDICAL BILL,

BY

LUCIUS,

LATE CENSOR, IN A ROYAL COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS.

"I am not here speaking of the private police of a Corporation, or the little arts of a craft. I am treating of the duties of a liberal profession, whose object is the health, and life of mankind."

"The true dignity of physic is to be maintained by the superior learning and abilities of those who profess it."—GREGORY.

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TO

SIR JAMES CLARK, Bart., M. D., F. R. S.,

PHYSICIAN IN ORDINARY TO THE QUEEN, AND TO HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS PRINCE ALBERT.

Sir James,

Your accurate knowledge of the subject discussed, no less than your exalted position, as a skilful and scientific physician, naturally suggest YOU, as the particular member of the Medical profession, under whose auspices, I desire this Brochure to issue from the press: the subject of which it treats is one of National importance, and, as graphically expressed by a writer, whose pen has materially swayed public opinion, in the present crisis, "generations of Medical men have passed away, and will again, without witnessing an epoch so fraught with influence." The profession's weal or woe—and with it, the welfare of the public, in points of great and permanent importance, are quivering in the balance, and depend, at this moment, on a vote of the House of Commons, or it may be on the deportment of the mass of the general practitioners of England!

Permit me, Sir James, to inscribe with your name, the following pages, in which are embodied my humble efforts to do good service to the community, and to a profession, which it has been the pride and pleasure of my life to study, and to practise—and to add that I have the honour to be with the highest sense of respect, your fellow labourer in the field of medical science.

LUCIUS.

PREFACE.

The following pages contain the substance of a series of letters published in the Standard, during the late Parliamentary recess, with such reflections as recent events have suggested. The subject is one to which the writer's attention has been long devoted, in active life, under circumstances, and in situations, both in England and Scotland, peculiarly favourable to the formation of a correct judgment. In retirement, he has, dispassionately, watched the medical agitation that has been going on, during the last ten months. Annexed is faithfully reported the result of his observation, which is respectfully submitted to the consideration of those, whose duty, as legislators, it now is, to improve the very defective laws which regulate medical affairs—a duty fraught with importance to Millions of all ages, sexes, and conditions. The author has reason to suppose, that a previous edition of this Brochure has contributed to correct misapprehensions, and to remove prejudices, which existed, as to the probable effect that will be produced on the interests of the public, and of the profession, by the operation of the Medical Bill, and he has been advised by friends, to attach his name to the present edition. A sincere desire to allow his production to be judged, solely, by its intrinsic value induces him to remain, *incognito*.

June 5th, 1845.

MEDICAL REFORM.

SECTION FIRST.

Question proposed, and a brief sketch of the origin and progress of the Medical profession in modern Europe.

THE question under consideration is, whether or not the bill prepared and lately brought into the House of Commons, by Sir James Graham and Mr. Manners Sutton, "for the better regulation of medical practice throughout the United Kingdom," will accomplish the important objects contemplated.

That the matter, *sub judice*, be rightly understood, it is requisite to discuss it, in a spirit widely different from that which actuates those who are, from time to time, expressing their opinions on the subject, and misleading the public through the medium of the Times newspaper, and other factious publications.

A brief sketch of the rise and progress of the profession in modern Europe, and of the condition in which it exists, in the present day, in the United Kingdom, will tend to facilitate my present design, which is, in the first place, to demonstrate that parliamentary interference is necessary, to amend the state of the medical profession; and in the second, to inquire if the fundamental principles of Sir James Graham's bill be sound—and if, as an enactment, it would be one, by which the public, and the profession, generally, will be benefited; and our medical institutions rendered subservient to the legitimate purposes for which they were called into existence.

The first establishments in which medicine was taught, after the revival of learning, were ecclesiastical, and the monks were the first physicians. When manual assistance was required, they sent their servants, who were also their barbers, to officiate—hence arose the

barber surgeons, a class of practitioners afterwards sufficiently celebrated.

A useful body of Jewish physicians, who possessed high reputation appeared, at the period referred to, but the monks, through their interest with the Court of Rome, obtained formal excommunication against all who committed themselves to their care.

It requires no argument to prove that medicine could not be successfully cultivated as a science, nor practised as an art, by the priesthood, who had other duties to perform, and in whom the medical character was merely adventitious and subordinate. Monkish cupidity, however, continued to engross the whole of the medical practice for a long time, notwithstanding edicts issued by Roman pontiffs, for the purpose of compelling ecclesiastics to confine their attention to their clerical functions.

Such was the condition of medical affairs, when the French court established a College of Surgery, between the members of which, and the clerical physicians, as well as between the former and the barber surgeons there were constant struggles for ascendancy; with the latter, however, the members of the Parisian college were, ultimately, obliged to unite. After the great event of the 16th century, clerical physicians were no longer known in England, as a distinct class. Linacre, the favourite physician of Henry the Eighth, in 1523, obtained the charter by which the London College of Physicians was incorporated.

The Edinburgh Royal College of Physicians was incorporated in 1681, during the reign of Charles the second.

No college of surgeons was founded in Britain until the reign of George III., although corporations of barber surgeons previously existed, possessing, political influence, little conducive, however, to the cultivation of surgery, or to the improvement of science.

A Royal College is now established in each division of the United Kingdom to regulate the education of Surgeons, and to superintend the peculiar interests of surgery.

In 1815, the English Apothecaries' Act was passed, which regulates the professional concerns of the general practitioners in England.

There are, in all, at least 18 bodies in the empire endowed with the power of creating doctors in medicine, or of granting licenses to practise; and strange to say, the Archbishop of Canterbury is possessed

of a right to bestow the "*Summi Honores in Medicina*" ; a right, however, rarely exercised—there is nevertheless, one distinguished individual in London, at present, who was created Doctor of Medicine by the venerable head of the Church. The selection was most creditable to the Archbishop, and to the gentleman on whom the honour was conferred.

Of these numerous licensing bodies, no two agree in the course of study prescribed, in the strictness of examination, nor in the amount of privilege obtained; and it is impossible to deny that most of them have attempted to procure their own partial ends, and to aggrandise themselves, at the expense of the medical student, and of the public, as time and circumstances favoured such selfish purposes.

It were an invidious and an ungracious task to dwell on the sins of omission and commission of the bodies referred to, in their corporate capacities; but it is impossible, faithfully to discharge the duty I have undertaken, without adverting to a point so vitally important to the right comprehension of the subject.

To begin with the Universities. At Oxford and Cambridge there are not competent schools of physic; nor, until lately, did these noble universities, so deservedly distinguished as seats of learning, require from candidates for medical degrees, a course of education, at all in conformity with the experience and improvements of modern times, in medical science; and, even now, their *medical* curricula are very defective.

The University of London is of recent date. The standard of education which it has imposed on candidates for medical honours is high, and the opportunities students enjoy of improving themselves in the practice of physic and surgery are, unquestionably, great. Sufficient time, however, has not yet elapsed, to enable us to form an accurate estimate of the benefit that will result from the foundation of an establishment in the metropolis of the British dominions, possessed of the power to grant medical degrees — a professor of one of its Colleges has, lately, published, a letter on the subject of Medical Reform, which, methinks affords no good augury of future enviable distinction either for himself, or his College. To that individual, I would, in the spirit of christian benevolence, say "scorn to depress a competitor by ungenerous means—strive to surpass your rival only

by excelling him, so shall your contest for superiority be crowned with honour, if not with success." And I would in the same spirit, remind certain Colleagues of the professor alluded to, that to *Edinburgh*, and to *Edinburgh* teachers, they are, in a great measure, indebted for their respective positions in a *London* College—*verbum sat sapienti.*

The medical school of the University of Dublin, is said by Mr. Wakely, M. P., and Editor of the Lancet, to be in a state of "gradual decline."

Edinburgh for nearly a century past, has been held in high estimation for its medical school, by all competent and impartial judges of medical affairs. The method of teaching, by lectures and examinations is most excellent, and the students enjoy ample and peculiar opportunities for the acquisition of practical knowledge. From no university in Europe has so large a body of eminent medical practitioners emanated: many of the most distinguished physicians who practised in England, in the metropolis and in the provinces, during the last sixty years, were Graduates, or *Alumni*, of the University of Edinburgh. The same may be said of the Army, the Navy, and East India Company's Service—at this moment, the names of Clark, Holland, Bright, Chambers, Prout, Forbes, Locock, Elliotson, Gregory, Marshall Hall, and other physicians of European reputation, who reside in London, whilst those of Blackall, Hastings, Conolly, and Shapter, *inter alios*, in the provinces, bear testimony to the same fact. The University of Edinburgh, never was better appointed, than at this moment, with professors capable of teaching every department of medical science. A very slight improvement only, and a more liberal *preliminary* education, of the kind so successfully practised at Oxford and Cambridge, would render its medical curriculum, perfect—and one which might serve as a model for the changes imperatively required, elsewhere.

At Glasgow the course of education prescribed for the candidates for medical degrees is very deficient.

The practice of selling degrees at St Andrew's was, as is well known, shamefully abused, and from it baneful effects have resulted to the profession. Medical diplomas, however, cannot now, be obtained at that university, merely by purchase; but the curriculum of the University of St. Andrew's is far from being perfect, and the mode of

examination is very objectionable.*

It is gratifying to add, that the academical senates of the most remote Colleges in the Queen of England's dominions have shewn a meritorious zeal in extending and improving the medical education of those, who seek from them the highest honours in medicine. The curricula of both King's and Marischal College, Aberdeen, are excellent, and most creditable to that ancient Caledonian seat of learning.

We now proceed to notice, briefly, the Royal Colleges of Physicians and Surgeons, in the British Empire, and the English Apothecaries' Company, and to advert to the effects of their policy, on medical education, and on the practice of physic.

The London College of Physicians, as already mentioned was founded in 1523; its general policy seems always to have been such as to ensure a high degree of learning, rather than to supply the public with medical practitioners proportionate to its necessities.

In speaking of the shortcomings of the London College of Physicians, I shall use the language of an able and candid anonymous writer.

"The London College of Physicians," says he, "deals very differently with candidates for admission, according as they announce their intention of practising in London or the provinces; candidates for provincial practice, or extra licentiates, being permitted to qualify by undergoing a very lenient trial indeed, and paying an inconsiderable fee; while licentiates who aspire to practise in the capital are tried by

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* With the intention of supporting the sadly damaged condition of her reputation as a medical degree-conferring Seminary, the Senatus Academicus of the University of St. Andrew's, some years ago, published a curriculum, which had it been acted on fairly, might have tended, in some measure, to remove the reproach, which previous delinquency had attached to the very name of a St. Andrew's Doctor. But the nominal curriculum was rendered nugatory, by an unjustifiable supplementary one, welcoming all possessed of the MEMBER's diploma of the London College of Surgeons, or the license of the English Apothecaries Company, as Candidates for such "SUMMI HONORES IN MEDICINA," as St. Andrew's confers! The result of such a finesse may, easily, be conjectured. Since the publication of the first Edition of this Brochure, I have been informed that no less than *twenty-six* individuals, who intended to try for a Medical degree, at the Univerity of Edinburgh, deterred by ascertaining the nature of the examinations, abandoned their intention of doing so, and went northward to St. Andrew's!—that a batch of *fifty-three* Doctors has just been made by that University! — and that, its *Senatus Academicus*, in anticipation of the passing of Sir James Graham's Medical Bill, has advertised the 1st of July, as a day, on which another wholesale creation of Graduates is to take place at St. Andrew's! a striking illustration this, I imagine, of Corporation *auri sacra fames*,

much severer tests, and subjected to higher fines. Whence this difference arises, or why the lives of Her Majesty's liege subjects are to be deemed more precious in the City of London, than throughout the rest of the kingdom, I leave to the College of Physicians to explain."

The Edinburgh Royal College of Physicians is one of the few Medical Institutions, against which no charge of delinquency, as a corporation, ever was, or can be fairly adduced. It has, most disinterestedly, rendered much good service to science, and to the Medical profession. The Pharmacopœias of the Edinburgh College of Physicians published from time to time, have always kept pace with the progress of chemical and pharmaceutical science, and thus tended materially, to improve the practice of Medicine. The last edition which issued from the press, in 1841, is a production of great value, and bears internal evidence of having been composed under the immediate superintendence of the learned and scientific President Dr. Christison, the distinguished professor of Materia Medica in the Northern Metropolitan University, author of the matchless work on Poisons, in relation to Medical Jurisprudence, Physiology, and the practice of Physic, and of a Dispensatory, or Commentary on the Pharmacopœias of Great Britain; a work, also, worthy of Dr. Christison's name and high reputation. The Edinburgh College of Physicians has always been active in furthering the cause of Medical education; and ever ready to assist Government with counsel and advice, when Medical truth, in connection with science, or humanity was the subject of investigation. The single complaint brought against this body is, that admission can only be obtained by the suffrages of the fellows, collected by ballot; and that the votes of one third present are sufficient to exclude a candidate. To me it has always appeared an injustice to withhold any professional privileges, from a man, to which he is entitled by his professional attainments—a wrong, however, which has very rarely been perpetrated by the Edinburgh Royal College of Physicians.

I am not sufficiently conversant with the constitution and policy of the Dublin College of Physicians, to enable me to speak, confidently, as to the effects thereof, on medical education, and practice, in Ireland. But this I know, that the Dublin College contains men who,

individually, have done honour to themselves and to their country, as medical practitioners and writers.

The London College of Surgeons has, unquestionably, numbered, and numbers, amongst its Fellows, men of the highest attainments, and of the strictest integrity; but, as a corporation, its proceedings have been, I fear, not without reason, censured. The curriculum and the general policy of the London College of Surgeons, contrast unfavourably with that of Edinburgh—a body which, to its great honour, has done more to improve the general practitioners, to elevate the *status* of that class, and to benefit the public—than any medical corporation that ever existed—a bold assertion this, but a literal truth. A better curriculum, for the general practitioner (the ordinary physician, surgeon, obstetrician, and apothecary, of the great mass of the population,) than that of the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh, can scarcely be devised.*

The Dublin College of Surgeons, corporately, is represented by Mr. Wakley, as in a very unsatisfactory condition.

The Apothecaries' act of 1815, did great injustice to the medical institutions of Scotland and Ireland, and to their graduates and licentiates, by preventing them from settling in England, as general practitioners; as well as to many highly educated and excellent men, who had served in the army and navy during the war, brought to a successful termination, at the moment, almost, when that unfortunate enactment was made, which has too long regulated the professional concerns of the general practitioners in England.

It will, I presume, be admitted that enough and more than enough, has been stated, to shew that the law, in regard to medical education and practice is in a very unsatisfactory and discreditable condition—and to make it evident that reformation is imperatively required.

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* See Appendix.

SECTION SECOND.

On the fundamental principles of Sir James Graham's Medical Bill, and the objections that have been urged against it.

THE three great principles of the bill are.—

First. The establishment of a Council of Health and Medical Education, which shall exercise a general superintendence over the medical and surgical education throughout the United Kingdom, and which shall constitute a board in the metropolis, of easy and useful access to the executive government, in all questions affecting the health of the people.

Second. To secure to all *qualified* medical practitioners throughout the empire, equal facility of practice: provision being at the same time made for equality of attainments, so far as that can be accomplished by study and examination.

Third. A registration of all regular practitioners, by which the public may easily ascertain who really are qualified.

A legislative enactment based on these principles, and capable of accomplishing ends so important, will effect almost all that any reasonable reformer, lay or medical, could desire—all that legislation can achieve,—will obviate the enormous defects of our present miserable medical polity, and be of incalculable benefit to the interests of science and humanity.

The objections which have been urged against Sir James Graham's Bill are, that the Council of Health will be a government board, and a despotic body—that, in it, all departments of the profession will not be represented—that neither the public, nor the profession will be protected from the machinations of Quacks and unqualified pretenders—and that the general practitioner will be depressed in the scale of Society.

In a constitutional point of view, the formation of a Council of Health is a matter of national importance ; and if constituted of proper elements, it is highly desirable that it should be a *Government* board.

One of the real grievances of our profession is, that government has hitherto cared little for its interests, or for the regulation of its concerns, and now for the first time, since the days of Henry VIII, when an enlightened Minister of the Crown comes forward to improve our condition, and to legislate for the good of the community, he is vilified by the c[illegible] of the Times newspaper, and by the Editor of the Lancet, the vituperations of which, I am ashamed to say, have been re-echoed by *some* men of the medical profession. Concerning the efforts of the *Times*, and the *Lancet*, their votaries and dupes, to defeat the Medical Bill, more shall be said afterwards.

The want of a Council of Health must have often been felt by the executive. I could refer to more than one occasion, when the interests of humanity would have been greatly furthered by the advice of such a council would, undoubtedly have given to the government. The interests of science and commerce are also deeply involved, and will, assuredly, be essentially promoted by the completion of Sir James Graham's design—a design beyond all doubt, fraught with importance to the best interests of philanthropy, science and commerce.

Before entering on the consideration of the question as to the *despotism* of the Council of Health, it is proper to advert to its constitution, and that will be best done in the words of the amended Bill. "And be it enacted, that a Council shall be established, which shall be styled 'The Council of Health;' and that one of Her Majesty's Principal Secretaries of State shall be a Member of the said Council, in right of his office as Secretary of State ; and that the Regius Professor of Medicine in the University of Oxford, the Regius Professor of Physic in the University of Cambridge, the Regius Professor of Physic in the University of Dublin, the Regius Professor of Clinical Surgery in the University of Edinburgh, and the Regius Professor of Surgery in the University of Glasgow, shall be Members of the said Council in right of their several Professorships ; and that the other Members of the said Council shall be a Member of the Senate of the University of London, to be chosen by the said Senate ; One physician and One Surgeon to be chosen by the Colleges of

Physicians and Surgeons of England respectively; One Physician and One Surgeon to be chosen by the Colleges of Physicians and Surgeons of Scotland respectively; One Physician and One Surgeon to be chosen by the Colleges of Physicians and Surgeons of Ireland respectively: Two General Practitioners to be chosen by the Council of the College of General Practitioners in Medicine, Surgery and Midwifery of England; and Four other persons whom Her Majesty, with the advice of Her Privy Council, shall deem fit to be Members of the said Council."

Our Universities, those ancient and venerable seats of learning, in which the light of science first dawned, and now shines with resplendent lustre, would as a matter of course, be represented by an appropriate number of their distinguished professors, in a Council of Health formed by a just and clear-headed Minister of the Crown.

The only question is, as to the number of Academical representatives that should sit in the Council of Health.

The number and description, as fixed by the amended Medical Bill, are well adapted to the present condition of medical affairs.

The Colleges of Physicians and Surgeons, Institutions founded by Royal favour, in order to foster the efforts of science, are sources from which a department of the Council of Health, and Medical education is naturally selected. Each College in the United Empire, is therefore, wisely, allowed to send one of its members as a representative, which, as already stated, with four individuals nominated by the Crown, are to constitute the Council of Health and Medical Education.

It is impossible to conceive a Board better calculated by its constitution to answer the purposes for which it is intended. The power being deposited in a body so constituted, that the interests concerned, are represented by departments so balanced, as to counteract each other in any selfish or sinister tendency, should such be displayed.

Self government in the Medical profession, as contended for by certain Medical Reformers, is an impracticable chimera.

The Universities and Colleges of Physicians and Surgeons in the different divisions of the empire, and the English Apothecaries company have, hitherto, been the sources from whence issued edicts, to regulate the study and practice of the various departments of the healing art. A new order of things is now requisite; but, both the

profession and the public would be injured by the democratic form of medical polity, desired by certain medico-political reformers, who would fain dictate to the government, to the profession, and to the public, the terms upon which medicine is to be taught, studied, and practised.

The power with which it is proposed to invest the Council of Health is, certainly, inconsistent with the idea of what revolutionists call self-government in the profession; but that affords no just ground for calling it a despotic body.

Absolute power must always reside somewhere, to direct the studies, and to regulate the privileges of medical practitioners. In future, it will be vested in *one* learned body — a national council, consisting of honourable and independent men, distinguished by their medical knowledge and scientific acquirements, as applicable to the important purposes for which their services are required, instead of being possessed by some twenty irresponsible corporations. The Council of Health, moreover, will be constituted, as has been already shown, so as to be a depository of power, safe as can be contrived by human ingenuity.

The power of enforcing uniformity of qualifications, throughout the kingdom, which the Council will possess, is one of the grounds on which it has been called despotic. Those only, who are ignorant of the state of the case, could have advanced such an objection—uniformity of qualification, so far as it can be accomplished by uniformity of course of study, being one of the two great objects which it is desirable to accomplish, in improving medical education. The two master evils of the present system have arisen from the want of a controlling power of the kind contemplated. Each medical school and licensing body has been prescribing a course of study, and regulations to suit its own purposes, rather than to further the interests of medical students, and the profession, or to promote public welfare.

There is, says the Editor of the *Medical* Times, "no surer test of the general work of the new Bill than its effect on the general practitioner. He is emphatically the *British Doctor*.* The new Bill, in giving us a supervising Council with plenary powers to fix the qualifi-

* If properly qualified.

cations each College shall demand—and making that demand equal throughout all—gives us a guarantee that our new men will sustain, worthily, the scientific character of our profession, and that the supply of labourers will bear a better and more reasonable proportion to the work that is to be done. If, as so many tell us, the *res angusta domi,* lie at the bottom of much of the Profession's discontent and uneasiness, this enactment of the Bill, humble and unshowy as it looks, will do more, practically, for the present generation, than a dozen grander schemes of formal revolution."

Medical licensing bodies have also been under-bidding each other, to an outrageous extent. If such under-bidding only related to the amount of fees, as remarked by Sir James Graham, it might be very well; but the general tendency has been to reduce the standard of knowledge required of candidates for medical degrees and licenses—to say nothing of the suspicion entertained, that the examinations have frequently been of a very superficial description.

As a striking proof of the justice of the charge, that licensing bodies have been lowering the standard of medical education, it may be mentioned, that the University of Glasgow, so recently as 1837, required its candidates for medical degrees to study eight departments of medical science only, whilst the Senatus Academicus of the University of Edinburgh insisted, imperatively, on fourteen.*

The London College of Surgeons does not require candidates for its diploma to produce any evidence of *preliminary* education! nor is attendance required on medical jurisprudence, clinical medicine, nor even clinical surgery! — whilst the English Apothecaries' company insists on candidates for its license serving an apprenticeship of five years, to an apothecary.

Amongst the capital errors of those, whose inadvertent legislation, in 1815, created the company referred to, was the assumption that its members were competent, to an extent far beyond their ability, to instruct the rising generation of general medical practitioners, in the principles of the Medical profession; and that an apothecary engaged in the laborious and harassing duties of his calling, had either time or inclination to teach apprentices, even that which he himself knew.

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* See Appendix.

The effects of a pernicious system of training, based on the Medical Legislation of 1815 has been, and is, wofully perceptible in many towns and villages in England, in the idle habits, and all the physical and moral evils resulting therefrom to the victims of the baneful apprenticeship system, as fixed by the regulations of the English Apothecaries' Company — and even where its effects have been less deplorable, it has presented, and presents, a barrier, almost impassable to the advancement in life, of many a talented youth.

Again — Surgery forms no part of the course of study enjoined by the Apothecaries' Company, so that the general practitioner of England, by the supreme authority which directs his professional education, is not required to study a department of the profession which is necessary to enable him to perform the ordinary duties of a surgeon. It is no answer to this glaring and most extraordinary defect in the English Apothecary's education, to say that he acquires a knowledge of surgery, under the auspices of the master to whom he is apprenticed. That can rarely be the case. It is equally unsatisfactory to assert that surgery must be studied by general practitioners before they pass the "College ;" and that most of them do so, before engaging in practice, since it is not imperative on the English practitioner to have a surgical diploma ; and, in fact, men there are who practise without it—and are legally entitled so to do, as licentiates of the Apothecaries' Company.

The objection in regard to the control of the Council, over the amount of fees paid for examination and admission into the several Colleges, is captious. The provision referred to is a very proper one, and will protect Students from being the victims of the *auri sacra fames*, by which corporate bodies are too often influenced.

An additional ground of complaint against the Council of Health, in support of the charge that it will be a despotic body, is that the council will have an unlimited power of regulating the particulars of examinations. The words of the proposed enactment for securing efficiency of examination are,—"And be it enacted, that the said council may from time to time require returns to be made in such form, and including such particulars, as they shall think fit, respecting the examinations to be conducted as aforesaid, and it shall be lawful for any secretary of the said council, deputed by the council for that pur-

pose, or for any member of the said council, being in either case a physician, surgeon, or licentiate in medicine and surgery, to be present at any of the said examinations; and if the council shall be of opinion that the regulations prescribed by them for the examination and grant of letters testimonial as physician, surgeon or licentiate, have been infringed, evaded or neglected by any of the said examining bodies, it shall be lawful for the said council to refuse to register upon the testimonials of the body so in default, until the same shall be amended to the satisfaction of the said council."

Suspicion, it is well known, has existed, that there is something rotten in the mode of examination practised by several of the licensing boards, the propriety of superintendence, therefore, is unquestionable.

If there exist any examining board unwilling to stand the test of such scrutiny as that to which, by an improvement of the law, it is about to be subjected, the sooner such a board ceases to exercise its functions, the better it will be be for the interests of science, and for the good of the community.

That the President of the Council of Health will be enabled to give the *coup de grace*, to use the words of the *Times*, to any college that does not yield implicit obedience to his decrees, is a count in the indictment against the Home Secretary, as the proposer of a "despotic" Council of Health.

In answer to this petulant objection, I have only to remark, that it *will* be the bounden duty of the president of the Council to give the *coup de grace* to any college that does not pay implicit obedience to his decrees; decrees which, be it remembered, will be the result of the collective wisdom of a Secretary of State, the representatives of the universities and colleges of the United Kingdom, and of four fit persons, selected for the express purpose of watching over the interests of the medical profession and of the public.

The *Times* perceives an act of despotic power in proposing that it shall be lawful for Her Majesty, at any time, with the advice of her Privy Council, to dismiss any member of the Council of Health, (not *ex officio)* for notorious misbehaviour or unfitness. In refutation of such an objection, it is sufficient to say, that dismissal is the penalty which all of her Majesty's other servants pay, and most properly, for notorious misbehaviour or unfitness for office.

It has presumptuously been made a grave matter of accusation, that the members of the first Council of Health are to be appointed by Her Majesty, with the advice of her Privy Council!

The arguments in support of the objection that the Council of Health and Medical Education will be a despotic body, have been satisfactorily, I presume, shewn to be frivolous and vexatious, or worse.

I now proceed to consider the question, how far penal enactments to restrain unqualified practitioners, should form any part of an enlightened system of medical policy; a subject which, at any time, when reviewing our code of medical laws, it were necessary to take into deliberate consideration; at this crisis infinitely more so, in consequence of the insane clamour which has been raised for *protection* to the Surgeon-Apothecaries of England.

Here again I am happy to have the support of the *Medical* Times, in corroboration of my own views on the subject under consideration. "Penalties are bad enough as *means*, but as an 'object of medical legislation,' Heaven forbid that a British Parliament should ever think of them. We affirm that protection is the very last of our wants. Give us justice, give us fair play, and we shall know how to protect ourselves."

"Protection is for the feeble, the helpless; the strong man, if honest, is independent, and if fairly dealt with, knows how to protect himself."*

In the *Times* it is written, "Sir James Graham has found out a new light of singular brilliancy; it is not his intention to suppress quackery by introducing new statutes; according to him, quackery could not be put down in that manner, and the House of Commons," adds the writer, censoriously, "cheered the annunciation." In doing so, the members of the House of Commons evinced a correct understanding of the state of the case, and a just perception of their legislative duty. The Lycurgus of the *Times*, however, and the Solon of the *Lancet* are of a different opinion.

The bill is represented as one, "to make quackery legal, and to inflict a heavy blow and a great discouragement on 30,000 medical men, with whose subsistence it will in many instances most materially

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* Medical Times, leading article, November 2, 1844.

interfere, we denounce it as a piece of most mischievous legislation." "Again we say, that we leave the interests of existing practitioners to themselves, depending on their taking sufficient pains to inoculate such members of parliament as may fall into their hands, with a proper *virus*" (a very appropriate word) "to prevent the bill ever passing into law."

The Times also gave, much additional bad advice, in reference to the Medical Bill;* and Mr. Wakley, one of the Parliamentary Representatives of Finsbury, transferred the reprehensible lucubrations of the oracles of Printing-House Square, entire, to the pages of his *Lancet*, as the leading article of an Hebdomadal number!—the first that appeared after Sir James Graham introduced his Medical Bill into the House of Commons, on the 7th of August, 1844.

In animadverting on the precious effusions of the *Times*, quoted above, its *Medical* namesake has graphically remarked,—"We have a fancy that the thing which vulgar people (Heaven forgive them!) call "a lie," and which hardly ceases to be disresputable when politely named "a misapprehension," is, under ordinary treatment, the least romantic and least elevated of terrestial entities. In the hands, however, of our gigantic contemporary, the "*Times*," who is never at his ease except when talking to his civic readers in the style of a cataract, or moving their heavy sensibilities after the fashion of an earthquake, the contemptible "mis-statement" (the humblest use of language) undergoes a startling transformation. Like the toad touched by Ithuriel's spear, its customary, hesitating, sneaking, cowardly characteristics disappear, as if by enchantment, and we have the lie bold and bullying, celestial in altitude as world wide in width, asseverating itself into a sublimity unknown to Longinus, with that high and insolent heedlessness of truth which, throwing the mind topsy-turvy, flings even first principles under suspicion. Yes! rare as, in our days, is Genius, — it may always be found in a lie of the *Times*."

"One of its recent—albeit smallest—efforts in this way, is contained in a recent article on the New Medical Bill; and, the subject-matter

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* Times Newspaper, August 9th or 10th, 1844.

considered, we question if even our contemporary, in so short a space, ever did "*the sublime*" after a handsomer manner.*

"The first daring affirmation, off-handedly thrown to us, is, 'that the English Medical profession numbers at least thirty thousand members, six hundred of whom may possibly, by a stretch of liberality, be allowed to be physicians or pure surgeons.' Of course, this free-and-easy assertion has a purpose to serve: the more numerous the medical profession, the less weight will the many gentlemen have, who, much to our contemporary's surprise, support the Bill: and the *piquancy* of our contemporary's '*fact*' is, that a tolerably well-known census exists, of no long standing, which gives us, of all grades, less than twenty-four thousand medical men for the three divisions of the empire, of which it distinctly classified three thousand as physicians!

"To the other sweeping assurances of our contemporary, that, with the exception of a portion of six hundred physicians and pure surgeons, the whole profession is against the Bill, we answer with the

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* Except perhaps when speaking of the Poor Law of England, which has been the daily theme of unmeasured abuse by the *Times* newspaper, for years past.

Circumstances have rendered it imperative on me, to direct my attention, particularly, to the condition of the poor—and especially to those labouring under disease in the neighbourhood where I reside—I am, consequenty, intimately acquainted with the working of the Poor Law of England—and with its practical effects—and competent to speak, as a disinterested witness, on the merits of that enactment. My personal experience, the result of two years strict observation, has forced on my mind the conviction, in opposition to pre-conceived notions engendered, (*horresco referens,*) by reading the mis-statements of the *Times*, that the Poor Law of England, and the Poor Law Commissioners, have been most falsely, and maliciously calumniated. It is true, that Boards of Guardians composed, partly at least of narrow-minded, ignorant individuals,—and these in some places led by tricky officials, sometimes turn a deaf ear to the clamorous and bold demands of the importunate pauper,—and are still less disposed to listen to the modest and plaintive entreaty of the timid applicant for relief. But an appeal properly made from a harsh decision of a Board of Guardians, by the most abject individual in England, finds ready access to the Poor Law Commissioners at Somerset House,—or, if need be, to the Secretary of State for the Home Department, is promptly considered and any real grievance speedily redressed, so far as it is in the power of these functionaries to do so.

That the Poor Law is not quite perfect in some parts of its extensive machinery I am well aware. But these imperfections are not to be remedied by the totally unjustifiable system of warfare carried on by the *Times*—the unpopularity of the Poor Law depends, in a great measure, on its mal-administration, by subordinate agents.

But it must be conceded by every just judge, competent to form an opinion on the subject, that the Poor Law of England secures to the victims of poverty and disease in the southern division of the kingdom, benefits unknown to the destitute in any other nation in Europe,—or indeed the world.

ready declaration, that the respectable majority of medical men—and we might even go further—give the measure in the words of the more disinterested Chronicle, a cordial though modified support. Meetings have been held in Leeds, Bedford, Birmingham, Chester, Devonport, Sheffield, Bradford, Worcester, Gloucester, York, Newcastle, and Liverpool, and in all these important agricultural or commercial towns, which may so well claim to represent the general feeling of the country, resolutions in modified approval of the bill were passed."

The following communication made by me to the Editor of the *Standard* newspaper, and copied from it into the pages of the *Morning Herald,* November 2nd, 1844, tends to unmask the Machiavelean Tactics of the self-dubded "leading Journal."

Sir,—It no longer suits the *Times* to report progress in regard to to the proceedings of the meetings which are held in the provinces, from time to time, to express the opinion entertained by the profession of Sir James Graham's Medical Bill, in compliance with the wishes of the Hon. Baronet. The comparative taciturnity of that journal on the subject is abundantly expressive of its chagrin at the aspect of matters, in regard to medical reform, immediately, and prospectively; and marks its dissatisfaction with those who have met to consider the provisions of the bill, which, upon all occasions, when the talented and respectable part of the profession were convened to consider its provisions, has, as a whole, been pronounced an excellent bill; and its author has been declared deserving of the best thanks, and the gratitude of the profession, and of the country. The bill, it is true, is by many considered deficient in *one* point, in not proposing to secure sufficient "protection," as it has been called, to the regular practitioner—in not, in other words, proposing to put down quackery by act of parliament, a performance which, Sir James Graham, with many other wise men, imagined it impossible to accomplish.

The *Times,* I have remarked, has become chary of late in reporting the proceedings of Meetings held throughout England, to consider the provisions made by Sir James Graham's bill. It is proper that the country should know, at stated intervals, through the medium of the respectable and trustworthy part of the public press, what the profession are about on a subject which will continue to be one of great public importance, until it be definitely settled by the fiat of parliament.

"It will, in the meantime, afford me pleasure occasionally to furnish for insertion in the columns of the *Standard* a report of the state of professional feeling, so far as I know it personally, or can collect it from authentic sources.

"At a late meeting of the medical profession at Oxford, J. Symonds, Esq., in the chair, the following resolutions were passed :—

"That this meeting recognises the necessity of some legislative enactment 'for the better regulation of medical practice throughout the United Kingdom,' and is, therefore, thankful for the opportunity afforded by Sir James Graham, of examining the details of a bill recently submitted to parliament, and the profession for that purpose.

"That the establishment of a Council of Health and Medical education, if justly constituted ; the general registration of all qualified practitioners, if compulsory ; the medical examination and certificate by the College of Physicians ; and the uniformity of qualifications and fees for testimonials, 'are propositions severally entitled to the approbation and support of the profession.'

"A meeting of the Tower Hamlets Medical Association was lately held in Bishopsgate-street to oppose Sir James Graham's bill. The *Times* devoted an entire column of its paper to a report of the proceedings of that meeting.

"It were an unprofitable waste of my time, and an unjustifiable encroachment on yours, to animadvert elaborately on the 'sayings and doings' of the individuals who met in Bishopsgate-street, to *protect* the medical profession; and to oppose Sir James Graham. But I may be allowed to remark, that the names of none of these medical champions are known to fame.

"The intention of this association is obviously to contribute its mite, in the words of one of its speakers, 'to baffle Sir James Graham.'

"The same orator remarked—'It had been said they had no friends at court ; but they had a friend in the House of Commons—Mr. Wakley, the staunch supporter of their privileges and interests, for many years the advocate of their rights and medical reform. Out of the House of Commons they had the leading organ of public opinion, the *Times* newspaper ; and why should they despair ?'

"Why ? for the three following reasons :—

"First. Because they are leagued with Mr. Wakley and the *Times* in attempting to accomplish an illegitimate object.

"Second. Because Mr. Wakley's oft-repeated opinion and recorded sentiments, on the subject referred to, render his influence of little avail in the House of Commons or elsewhere.

"Third. Because the *Times* newspaper is profoundly ignorant of, or grossly misrepresents, the real wants and wishes of the medical profession, and of the public in regard to medical reform. It is a partisan of a party in the profession; and, moreover, displays the rancour of a personal enemy in its opposition to Sir James Graham's bill.

"The speakers at the meeting of the Tower Hamlets Association, in the language of the *Medical Times*, 'went at the bill tooth and nail; the burden of the speeches was protection! protection! protection!'"

As an additional mode of exposing the absurdity of the clamour for legislative protection to the medical profession, I quote remarks written 26 years ago, by one thoroughly conversant with the subject of medical legislation.

"Penal and restrictive enactments having at all times been so much resorted to for regulating political institutions and controlling the community, it may be right to inquire how far they should form any part of an enlarged and enlightened system of medical polity: that they never can have effect where the general concurrence of the public is wanting multiplied experience has proved. Without entering into any deep investigation of the natural rights and liberties of the subject, or the fundamental principles by which the infliction of penalties and impositions of restrictions are in any instance to be justified, I shall briefly remark, that if the legislature provide all due facility for the supply of regular and legalised practitioners, equal to the demand, so as to secure a sufficiency of such accommodation to the public, it has a right afterwards to insist that the denominations by which such regular practitioners are distinguished shall be strictly confined to them, and not usurped by unqualified pretenders. So far the interference of law is but a protection from imposition, not an infringement of right. To attempt to restrain the public from seeking advice in any quarter, or any individual from giving it when applied

to, is absurd, and must ever be nugatory; for the public never will submit to such dictation. No one, however, who is not duly qualified should be allowed to assume a denomination calculated to mislead the public into belief of his competency, or to hold out to any, signals or seducements to lure them to his toils. To this extent may restriction be carried without the slightest trespass on natural rights, or the least risk of impeding the just services of the public; beyond it they can neither prove just nor salutary."

Sir James Graham's Medical Bill, in reference to the point which forms the subject immediately under consideration, is precisely in conformity with the enlightened and constitutional views of the able medical writer whose sentiments I have quoted, and with those of all sound political economists and well informed medical practitioners of this and the last century.

The question as to patent medicines, being a safe or proper source of revenue, is a suitable one for the consideration of a paternal government, and will, I doubt not, ere long, receive it from the imperial parliament of Great Britain. The sensible writer whose observations on penal medical restrictions were quoted, has well said "If a fortunate and meritorious discovery of a useful drug or compound medicine be alleged, let the claimant, who, not content with honourable fame, and the gratification of his own benevolent feelings, seeks the more substantial meed of pecuniary benefit, boldly prefer his claim to the government.—let the merits of his improvement be scrutinised by the medical council of the nation, and its value ascertained,—and let him receive a suitable, and not sparing reward from the liberality of his country. But let not every daring and hardened impostor, who can muster up the cost of procuring a patent, and sear his conscience to the point of sacredly attesting those falsehoods, by which he unblushingly maintains the efficacy of his inert or noxious nostrums, have power to extend his deceptions under the sanction of royal license, or to practice successfully this juggle of the worst kind."

The objection, that the general practitioners will be depressed by the operation of the proposed plan of medical reform, is noticed in the subsequent section.

SECTION THIRD.

General remarks on Sir James Graham's Medical Bill.

Although the *Times*, for sufficient reasons, has ceased to report the proceedings of meetings convened to consider the proceedings of Sir James Graham's Medical Bill, its candid scribe who writes the articles on Medical Reform continues to labour in his meritorious calling. Of this we have a choice specimen in the *Times* of Saturday last,—one admirably calculated to illustrate the *Jim Crow* principles of that self-dubbed-leading organ of public opinion.

We are told, in the precious production referred to, that Sir James Graham's bill is "drawn with a cunning worthy of an Italian politician;" in other words, that it is drawn with exquisite skill. And this, we are told by the *Times*, which was wont to abuse the bill as a contemptible production, and to sneer at its author as a senator "singularly deficient in acquaintance with the condition of the medical profession in this country."

So long as the *Times*, and its democratic coadjutor, imagined it would suit their sinister purposes to represent Sir James Graham as deficient in knowledge of the condition of the medical profession, they audaciously did so, and presumptuously declared the bill to be one characterised by imbecility! The "*leading organ*" having had proof which galled it to the quick, that it would not do to represent Sir James Graham as a man ignorant of the state of the medical profession, nor his bill as a weak one, all at once turns about, "jumps Jim Crow," and asserts that the bill was drawn with the cunning of an Italian politician.

"Oh! what a tangled web we weave,
"When first we practice to deceive!"

Sir James Graham's task was an arduous one; his difficulty consisted in correcting the accumulated evils of 300 years erroneous legislation. Even the latest English medical enactments, that of 1815 in particular, proceeded on narrow principles, and their operation instead of being beneficial, proved hurtful, by increasing the obstacles to a general methodical reform, in which the paltry, jarring interests of individuals, and corporations of physicians, surgeons and apothecaries, should be disregarded, and the only rational object of a medical institution—the providing for the wants and security of the public—should be kept steadily in view. That cardinal point Sir James Graham *has* kept steadily in view; and, it will be allowed by all, not wilfully blind, that he has also paid due regard to existing interests, so far as consistent with his duty to the community. The *salus publica* should be the grand object of legislation.

But what still say the perverse opponents of the amended Medical Bill? that its "scope and tendency are to ruin and degrade the great mass of British Doctors!" The most strenuous efforts have perseveringly been made to convince medical practitioners, that such will be the result of Sir James Graham's Bill, and to persuade Members of Parliament to oppose it, on the same preposterous grounds!

With the confidence of one, who, unbiassed by party or personal considerations, has studied the subject, in all its bearings, for a quarter of a century, I affirm that the reverse will be the direct result; that the reform proposed will secure to the medical profession, and to the public all the benefit which can accrue from an act of the legislature. And I, moreover, maintain that it will greatly elevate the *status* of English general practitioners in the scale of society.

It were idle to expose the futility of the reasoning, if reasoning it can be called, by which the prejudiced opponents of the amended Medical bill infer, that the profession will be injured by its operation.

I would, however, remark, that were a minister of state, backed by parliament, to meditate the ruin and degradation of the "great mass of British doctors," he would fail in an attempt so unworthy of his exalted position — so inconsistent with the duty he is solemnly pledged to perform. An element of power exists in our free country, which, in reference to the matter under consideration, is superior to the power of parliament, potent although it be—the power of the public to form

its own opinion, on the merits of medical practitioners—a prerogative freely exercised, and, generally, correctly—not, at any rate, controllable by parliamentary enactments.

On the unfettered, and unfetterable exercise, of that power—a Briton's birthright—depends the prosperity of "British doctors." But it is monstrous to suppose that her Majesty's acute Home Secretary of State should err, as he has been represented to have erred, by the unscrupulous advocates of a bad cause. So far from having done so, Sir James Graham's bill will confer a boon of inestimable value, on the medical profession, and on the community of Great Britain and Ireland, which will entitle him to a conspicuous niche in the temple of fame, as a medical legislator, when the names of those who would detract from his reputation, are buried in oblivion.

I have said, that the reasoning of those who affect to foresee evil to the medical profession, by the operation of the amended Medical Bill, is futile. Let us examine the facts,—three in number, "strong startling, and clearly before us," they say—

First, "that if the bill become an enactment, the present general practitioner, although a member of the College, will cease to be a surgeon." Secondly, "that he will be allowed to fill no public situation of repute without further collegiate examinations and titles." Thirdly, "that the most distinguished men of their body will, by a necessary action of the bill, be drawn from them to the higher grade of surgeon or physician." It is absurd to suppose that the present respectable member of the London College of Surgeons will cease to be a surgeon, in the ordinary, and true sense of the word, if Sir James Graham's bill pass. It is equally so to imagine that he will not in future, as heretofore, perform all the ordinary and extraordinary functions for which he feels himself competent. The direct result of the bill, however, will be to render the entire body of English general practitioners better qualified for the performance of surgical duties, since neither an adequate preliminary education, nor a knowledge of Surgery are, at present, required by the board, (the Court of Examiners of the Apothecaries' Company) which regulates their course of professional study! And it is a fact, "strong, startling, and clearly before us," that many individuals practise in England, without being possessed of any other licence. The practitioner who, very lately,

gained himself shocking notoriety, by the extraordinary treatment of an obstetrical case, at Costessey is one of the number.*

As to the second fact, that the general practitioner will be allowed to fill no public position of repute, without further collegiate examination and titles, the promulgators of such a fact, misapprehend or misrepresent the scope and tendency of Sir James Graham's bill: qualified general practitioners will be eligible to many public positions of repute, to which the great bulk of them at present aspire, or desire to occupy. If the effect of the bill shall be to increase the chance of preferment, in any way, to the best educated and most talented members of the general practitioners, that, *surely*, were as it ought to be, and the public will gain by the result.

With regard to the third fact, I have only to observe, that the measure is a commendable one, and illustrative of sound legislation, which encourages honourable emulation amongst the members of the medical profession—emulation of a kind conducive to their own, and their country's welfare.

This publication would be incomplete, without adverting to certain meetings which were lately convened in the metropolis, and incorrectly, styled "Medical Protection Societies," &c., many members of which, foolishly, seem to entertain the same indefinite idea of deriving immediate *personal* advantage, from medical reform, that political agitators imagined would result from the Reform Bill, passed—some 14 years ago. The language and deportment of various individuals who figured at these meetings have been sadly inconsistent with their lofty pretensions, and ambitious aspirations! and betray deplorable ignorance of their proper place in the medical profession. These persons are, I trust vainly, attempting, to occupy a position which would be a false one, both for themselves and for society. Their bearing, towards the Right Honourable framer of the Medical bill, and towards a distinguished surgeon of more than European reputation, who at present, occupies the President's chair of the Royal College of Surgeons, affords painful proof, that the *moral* temperament of a portion of the general practitioners of England, as well as that of writers who oppose Sir James Graham's Medical bill, requires amendment.

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* Medical Times, March 15.

The virulent opposition which the medical bill has encountered, on the south side of the Tweed, evidently results from motives unconnected with the merits of the question, or the welfare of the public.

It may, pertinently, be remarked, that whilst much violent agitation has taken place in England, the Colleges of Physicians aud Surgeons, and practitioners of Scotland, and Ireland, and the press, in these divisions of the empire, have acted very differently. Scotland, confidently relying on the Legislature, in its wisdom, acting *pro bono publico*, has, merely, transmitted petitions respectfully suggesting such changes, as seemed necessary. Ireland has performed her part in a manner, equally meritorious.

As an individual, I have no hesitation in recording my deliberately formed opinion, that the Medical Bill, now before the House of Commons, contains conclusive evidence of emanating from a master mind—that the comprehensive system of medical polity it propounds is one founded, for the first time in the history of British medical legislation, on sound fundamental principles,—and that it will accomplish the important objects contemplated.

SECTION FOURTH.

Observations on the present state of professional feeling concerning the Government Medical Bill.

On the evening of Tuesday, February 25th, Sir James Graham, amidst the profound attention of the house, which was very fully attended, introduced the medical bill.

The Honourable Baronet concluded a lucid speech, as follows :

"I have endeavoured to meet fairly the objections of the great body of medical men who have canvassed my measure. I do not complain in the least of the severity of criticism to which it was subjected. I was only anxious to avail myself of the knowledge of the subject which that criticism disclosed. I do now commit the bill to the consideration of the profession and the public. I certainly have taken a calm and dispassionate view of the whole subject, and with only one desire—to promote the interests of the profession and of the public. The labour I have bestowed on it will not be thrown away, in the least degree, if that object shall be gained ; and I certainly commit it to the further consideration of the house, and the country, in the confident hope and expectation, that this session will not close, without some measure receiving the sanction of parliament, which shall better regulate medical practice throughout the United Kingdom."

On the question being put, perfect unanimity seemed to prevail. And Mr. Wakley said that he heard the Honourable Baronet with great satisfaction ; he really believed that the difficulties which beset the subject would now be amicably and finally settled ; and was so satisfied, that Sir James Graham, from the alterations he had proposed, was anxious to conciliate all parties in the profession, that he had only to request, he would not propose the second reading of the bill at an early period, but give time for the most mature consideration of its provisions, by the profession.

Sir James Graham agreed to defer the second reading of the bill until after Easter.

The medical bill was again, *pro forma*, before the House of Commons, in March, but no discussion of its merits took place.

On Wednesday, May 7th.; Sir James Graham, in moving that the Physic and Surgery Bill should be committed, distinctly explained the changes, he proposed to make, in addition to those previously announced—the most important of which was his acquiescence in the wish of a large and respectable body of general practitioners, to incorporate them, as a distinct College; the Company of Apothecaries having agreed to surrender all its existing powers; and in concluding a distinct statement of his whole measures, in all their various and important bearings, said, he had bestowed great attention on this subject; more than on almost any other in the course of his life, and had honestly endeavoured to overcome the extreme difficulty of the question.

Mr. Hawes, the member for Lambeth, who has devoted much time and attention to medical reform; and to whom, next to Sir James Graham, the country is indebted upon that subject, expressed his approval of the bill, and anticipated its success.

Mr. Warburton made some remarks concerning the mode of examining candidates for Degrees, by the medical professors of the University of Edinburgh, which clearly evinced inaccurate knowledge of the proceedings of the Medical Faculty of that University.

Mr. Wakley, to the astonishment of the House, after the statements he made when the bill was brought in, said, he believed that the alterations which the Home Secretary had announced, would be productive of the greatest possible *dissatisfaction*—a statement so inconsistent with the sentiments he uttered when leave was given to bring in the bill, occasioned marked surprise Mr. Wakley, moreover, expressed himself in such vituperative terms, as to render it necessary for him to apologize to Sir James Graham.

The bill passed through the committee, and was reported to the house, with some verbal alterations. It will be re-committed on Monday, June 9th.

It is no part of my duty, to account for the discrepancy of Mr. Wakley's opinion, in February, and in May, regarding the,

merits of the government medical reform bill. I have declared my solemn conviction of its adaptation to the legitimate wants and wishes of the medical profession, and of the public—and I rejoice to add that my sentiments are in accordance with those to whom, in matters connected with medical affairs, we are accustomed to look with respect and deference. The arch enemies, however, of the measure, the Times and the Lancet, true to their original detestation of Sir James Graham's bill, clamour for its rejection ; or for it being put off, until another season !

I do not consider it incumbent on me, to prove Mr. Wakley's incompetency for the delicate and arduous duty of medical legislation, otherwise than by his own words and deeds. He has, for upwards of 20 years past, professed himself to be a radical medical reformer ; and has grossly abused, by turns, every medical institution established by law in the kingdom. The London and Dublin Colleges, and the English Apothecaries' Company, have been the subjects of his special vituperation. Mr. Wakley has also vilified, in a manner calculated to shock the feelings of all reasonable men, many of the most distinguished members of these institutions, individually. It were a a sorry and a sickening task, even to refer to the volumes he has written on this subject—but, with the view of proving the Finsbury representative an unsafe medical reformer, I refer to the leading article of his Lancet, May 19th, 1832, which reports the proceedings of an hospital dinner, in these words:—

"One of those farces denominated the annual hospital dinner was performed on Saturday week, and who, gentle reader, think you, was in the chair? Mr. Pennington, the ex-apothecary of Keppel Street, medical attendant, for many years to all the *rotten-hearted Tories* resident in the north-west district of the metropolis." The venerable individual referred to, an Octogenarian, presided with great credit to himself, and advantage to his brethren, at the meetings of the Associated General Practitioners, held lately in London, for the purpose of negotiating with the Home Secretary, as to incorporating the general practitioners of England into a distinct College. To Mr. Pennington's (and those who acted with him) moderate counsels, in opposition to the revolutionary efforts of wild and impracticable reformers, is to be attributed the position now occupied

by the Associated General Practitioners, of England—and with that, the prospect of a speedy and satisfactory adjustment of the differences which have so long distracted the profession.

But to return to Mr. Wakley's remarks on medical establishment: "The whole of our medical institutions," said that rampant reformer, "are conducted under Tory forms of government, and not *one* of them holds out a reward for merit.* The College of Physicians is a Church and King Establishment, the Apothecaries is another of the same stamp, and the College of Surgeons is the worst of the three. We marvel that even Mr. Pennington, Lord Eldon's apothecary, could, in a company of gentlemen consisting principally of medical students, pronounce the words Church and King without a blush—a toast which we suppose is now seldom heard, except within the cloisters of Oxford"—all this, and much more in the same style, *to students!* But it may be said, that thirteen years have elapsed since Mr. Wakley penned the above precious lines; and that, time, and other causes have cooled the warmth of a fervid temperament.

The following letter, *inter alia,* which appeared in the Lancet of Dec. 7, 1844, affords proof to the contrary: by whom it was written, or in whose bureau concocted, we are not told, but by inserting it in his periodical, in support of an object that he has much at heart, Mr. Wakley identifies himself with the principles and assertions of the writer. The letter bears evident impress of being the work of one, who can only, ironically, be styled "a man of veracity."

"THE ILLEGAL PRACTITIONERS IN ENGLAND AND WALES."

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

"SIR,—You express surprise and astonishment that the bill of Sir James Graham meets with so much approbation from general practitioners. If you analyse the proceedings of many of the great medical meetings recently held, you will find that the principal speakers, in upholding the principles of the bill, are mere Scotch M.D's, without

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* We have been, it appears, labouring under a great mistake in rendering homage to our Cullens, our Monroes, our Gregorys, our Hunters, our Baillies, our Halfords, our Coopers, our Abercrombies, and the many illustrious men, who, we imagined, graced the medical annals of our country, during the last century,—who occupied the chairs of our Colleges and of our Halls,—and who were honoured, professionally, with the confidence of the Sovereigns of our mighty Empire. LUCIUS.

any qualification at all to practise in England—men who fearlessly and presumptuously usurp the place of the general practitioner; who, under the style and title of physicians, visit patients for five shillings; who see and prescribe for medical and surgical cases alike; who act, in point of law, in England, no better than quacks, and, like quacks, undersell the general practitioner. The bill proposes to legalize their practice in this country; can you wonder, therefore, at the strenuous efforts they make to have the bill in its present detestable shape? It tends to elevate them in the scale of public opinion, without putting them to the inconvenience of obtaining a licence from one or other of the English bodies. I feel convinced of this, that the feelings of the *English* general practitioners are strenuously opposed to the bill; whilst the half-castes, the semi-Scotch and Irish Medici, seek it for their own aggrandizement, to better their breed. You have my best and sincerest wishes for the ultimate success of your efforts to *damn* this bill in embryo, the most unphilosophic and unjust that could have been presented to the eyes of an enlightened nation.

I remain, Sir, yours obediently,

A. E. P."

"Well spoken advocate of sin and shame,
"Known by thy "blustering————————thy name."

Were additional evidence required to prove that Mr. Wakley's temperament renders him an unfit leader in such a crisis as the medical profession is at present involved, it is furnished in the leading article of the Lancet of Saturday, May 31, 1845. The man seems influenced by the spirit of desperation; galled, apparently, by the bitterness of disappointed hopes, probably of a most unreasonable description, Mr. Wakley has, since the Medical Bill was last before the House, been endeavouring, most strenuously, to create dissension in the ranks of the general practitioners, by every means which a distempered imagination could suggest; and been urging them to accomplish the object recommended by his reputed correspondent A. E. P., in language which *I* cannot condescend to repeat.

I have a few words to say concerning the recent oft-repeated twaddle of the *Times*, intended, it appears, as grave advice to the Fellows of the proposed College of General Practitioners, regarding the name, they should select: *Medical Surgeons* is the appellation, which, "*we*"

of the Printing-house Square, in the plenitude of "*our*" wisdom, have fixed on. In another place I have shewn that the public are not now misled by a name, in the selection of a medical attendant. If a man be properly qualified, and correct in his moral and professional deportment, it signifies little by what appellation he is designated, provided it convey the idea of adequate qualification: on this point I may, safely, consider myself better authority than "we" of the *Times*, and I aver that a better name than that of "general practitioners" in medicine, &c., cannot be devised; I have no hesitation in saying that, with the right to assume the title of Doctor, Surgeon, or general Practitioner, it is to me a matter of great indifference by which I am addressed—and if engaged again in the active duties of my profession, it would be to me a subject of serious reflection, whether or not, I should prefer the name of general practitioner, to that of any other.

What else, in reality, was Sir Astley Cooper? or Mr. Abernethy? or Dr. Abercrombie? or Dr. Thompson? it was in consequence of having been such, that the two latter distinguished men, as they advanced in life, were, by common consent, justly pronounced the first practical medical authorities in the Kingdom. It is a mistake to suppose that a general practitioner must, necessarily, perform surgical, obstetrical or pharmaceutical duties. He ought undoubtedly, to be conversant with each, and, *cæteris paribus*, will, be more fit to act as a physician, if he has actually practised the surgical and obstetrical arts; but any member, of the profession, (his qualification for *all* being complete) as he advances in life, is entitled to follow the bent of his own inclination, as to the description of disease he thinks proper to treat. And in reference to the history of medical practitioners, it will be found that the natural tendency of things is to glide into the course referred to.

Now, a parting word to the *Times* and the *Lancet et ad id genus omne*,—whilst, malevolently, essaying to defeat the Government Medical Bill, the demagogues of these factious publications are only labouring in their vocation. Each presides over a press, to the very existence of which, strife and discord are essential elements. On the minds of such men, reason is brought to bear in vain. Sir James Graham will,

doubtless continue to treat them, and their malignant efforts, with scorn and contempt.

> Justum et tenacem propositi virum
> Non civium ardor prava jubentium,
> Non vultus instantis tyrrani
> Mente quatit solida;———

It is Dugald Stewart, I think, who, in words to the following effect, has said, that the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge may be likened to two noble ships, so safely moored by the strength of their cables, and the weight of their anchors, as scarcely to feel the impulse of the current, in the midst of which they gallantly ride.

The positive determination of those time-hallowed Institutions to retain their antiquated privileges, in connection with medical affairs, is, I conceive, an example of the justness of Mr. Stewart's simile.

With many, who venerate the very atmosphere of the Cam and of the Isis, in which may be said to float knowledge, suitable to every inquiring mind; and where each may inbibe something congenial to its own original conceptions, I regret the determination of the two old English Universities, in reference to the Medical Bill, since, the atmosphere of Oxford and Cambridge is, as yet, but slightly impregnated with elements, essential to the healthy professional condition of the sons of Æsculapius.

The arrangments entered into are, however, it appears, the best that *could* be made,—that in regard to the examination of Candidates for medical degrees is a great improvement.

The newspaper press, throughout the Kingdom, with the exception of the *Times* and the *Morning Chronicle*, (the latter has generally taken a moderate view of the subject,) has shewn a marvellous reluctance to discuss this great question.

It only remains for me to repeat that the individuals, to whom in matters connected with the study, and practice of medicine, we are accustomed to look, with feelings of deference and respect, are convinced that the Government Medical Bill, as an enactment, will be one, conducive to the best interests of the public, and of the profession.

The Colleges of Physicians and Surgeons in the different divisions of the Empire are satisfied with its fundamental principles. The

general practitioners in Scotland and Ireland, not fellows of colleges rejoice at the prospect of its becoming the law of the land; and a committee of a very numerous association of English Surgeon-Apothecaries, appointed with full powers, has declared itself satisfied with a Charter of Incorporation, on the terms offered by Sir James Graham.

The respectable part of the medical press, with one accord, has done justice to Sir James Graham's talent as a Medical Legislator; has lauded the temper, moderation and forbearance he has displayed, as a statesman, amidst difficulties and annoyances of a very vexatious description; and has strenuously supported the measures proposed in his Medical Bill.

We may, therefore, confidently anticipate that, sanctioned by the authority of the Imperial Parliament of the British Empire, our Most Gracious Sovereign's Right Hon. Secretary of State for the Home Department will, forthwith, be enabled to enroll the "Bill for Regulating the Profession of Physic and Surgery," as an enactment in the Statute Book of these realms, there to remain, as a lasting monument of his sagacity—and of the wisdom of those who guide the destinies of our Country, in the Forty-fifth year of the Nineteenth Century.

APPENDIX.

Commentary on the Course of Medical Education required by the Statutes of the University of Edinburgh, of Candidates for a Medical Degree &c.

Allegations have been made against the University of Edinburgh, as a School of Medicine, to the effect that her Acadmeical Senate was disposed to fix a low standard of education, and that the Professors were "lax," in their Examinations of Candidates for Medical Degrees.

These allegations have been invested with an importance, to which otherwise they were not entitled, in consequence of an observation made by Mr. Warburton, in the House of Commons, on the evening of May 7th; and by the publication of a Letter addressed to the Right Honourable Sir James Graham, by Richard Quain, F. R. S. Professor of Anatomy, in University College, London. Such imputations are formidable in appearance, from the authority quoted by these Gentlemen as the ground on which they are founded, viz.—the Royal Commission appointed some twenty years ago, to inquire into the condition of the Scotch Universities, "consisting of Scottish Noblemen and Gentlemen, Scottish Physicians occupying a place amongst the foremost of the Profession, and a Professor in a Scotch University." The names of Drs. Thomson, Abercrombie, and Davidson, are mentioned by Mr. Quain, in support of the imputation.

This subject is one on which I am competent to speak with confidence, since the duty of enquiring into the accuracy of a similar charge devolved upon me, nine years since. It is true that at one period, sufficient pains were not taken to secure a *high* degree of literary and scientific knowledge, not necessarily connected with the study of Medicine, and I have recorded my sentiments to that effect, in a publication which was favourably noticed by the public press of the day. But the error was one of the times rather than that of the Senatus and Patrons of the

Edinburgh University has been amended if not entirely corrected. In Mr. QUAIN's zeal for improvement, why did he not complain of the condition of *Medical* Education at Oxford and Cambridge? where, notwithstanding the most deservedly high reputation of these splendid monuments of our country's literary and scientific character, *Medical* Education is still in a very imperfect state!

With Drs. THOMPSON, ABERCROMBIE, and DAVIDSON, and other Fellows of the Edinburgh Royal College of Physicians, and with the hearty concurrence of the Medical Professors of the University, I was a party to a treaty entered into some years since, in anticipation of that change about to take place in our Medical relations, that will render a proper preliminary education imperative, on all Candidates for Medical Degrees from the University of Edinburgh.

It surely behoved MR. QUAIN to ascertain the *present* sentiments of "Scottish Physicians occupying a place amongst the foremost of the profession," as well as those of the Medical Professors, at Edinburgh, before bringing forward the names of two of the former, and citing that of a distinguished Physician, now no more, on a point deeply affecting, the interest, and fair fame of the first Medical School in Europe.

Situated, as I am, at the opposite extremity of the Kingdom, I have no means of knowing the opinions of Drs. THOMSON. and DAVIDSON, but it must, I imagine, have astounded these learned gentlemen, to see the use made of their names by the author of the letter, I have taken the liberty to criticise.

As to the Report of the Royal Commission, I have only to say, that it contains statements made on erroneous impressions, concerning the actual proceedings and intentions of the Medical Faculty, as, such of the Noblemen, and Honourable Gentlemen of whom the Commission consisted, as are still alive, will, I doubt not, admit. But farther, I defy any one to prove that either the Members of the Royal Commission, or any "Scottish Physician occupying the foremost place in the profession," ever said that the Professors of the University of Edinburgh, were, in the words of Mr. WARBURTON, "lax" in their examinations, or in those of Mr. QUAIN, that the Royal Commission "pointed out the injurious effects of Professors testing the fitness of their own Pupils to receive Academical Degrees." I have no copy of the Report, within my reach; but according to my recollection, the Commissioners merely ex-

pressed an opinion, to the effect, that, in their judgement, such a mode of examination was not the best that could be devised; but they certainly did not, as might be inferred from Mr. QUAIN'S way of stating the case, accuse the Professors of dereliction of professional, or rather moral duty. The fact is, the question is a difficult one. The Commissioners found it such, and, if my memory deceive me not, acknowledged that they were compelled to leave it, unsettled.

Sir JAMES GRAHAM'S plan of having the Examinations conducted by the Professors, in presence of a competent and disinterested Assessor is the effectual method of obviating the difficulty. Men deeply immersed in the details of practice, whatever may be said to the contrary, are *not* so fit to be Examiners, as Teachers, especially if those Teachers be Physicians of practical experience, which some of the Medical Faculty of the University always have been, and from the very nature of their positions always must be. I may, with propriety, quote the names of CULLEN, MONRO, GREGORY, DUNCAN, and BELL, amongst the departed Physicians and Surgeons; and those of ALISON, CHRISTISON, BALLINGALL, SYME, and SIMPSON, amongst the present distinguished men, who compose the Body referred to, as incontrovertible evidence of the accuracy of my assertion,—men, each and all of them, teachers, and practitioners,—whose names are known and respected, wherever Medicine is practised, or Science is cultivated.

The course of Study insisted on by the Patrons, and Medical Faculty of the University of Edinburgh is excellent, it has been so for many years past; and the examinations are of a very searching kind; the Professors, therefore, have nothing to lose, but much to gain, by the presence of a competent and impartial judge of their proceedings, as examiners.

The following Extract from a Memorial that the Patrons of the University of Edinburgh addressed to LORD JOHN RUSSELL, in 1837, then Secretary of State for the Home Department, substantiates my averment, in regard to the excellence of its Medical Curriculum; whilst it corroborates the statement made in page 20, of this publication as to the comparative value of an Edinburgh and Glasgow Medical Degree. The Curriculum of the London College of Surgeons is also given, that, by the same test, the value of a St. Andrew's Medical Degree may be estimated.

"Your Memorialists and their predecessors have long been impressed with the importance of sustaining the high reputation of the University as a Medical School, by requiring a high standard of education; and with this view, they have from time to time, with the concurrence of the Senatus Academicus, made various additions to the Medical curriculum for the degree of M. D. Within the last twenty years, they have increased the number of imperative classes from *seven* to *fourteen;* they have doubled the amount of Hospital attendance, and they have required an additional year's study. They have likewise enforced means of obtaining *practical* information. In the University of Glasgow, which comes nearer to Edinburgh, both in the value of its degree and in the annual number of its Graduates, than any of the Medical Schools, there are only eight imperative classes, while the attendance required out of the University, in order to acquire a *practical* knowledge of the Medical profession, is likewise considerably smaller. This will be obvious, from the following comparative view of the curricula of both Universities:

Curriculum for the University Degree of M. D. in Edinburgh.	Curriculum for the University Degree of M. D. in Glasgow.	Curriculum for Diploma of the London Royal College of Surgeons.
1. Anatomy.	1. Anatomy.	1. Anatomy.
2. Chemistry.	2. Chemistry.	2. Practical Anatomy. Demonstrations and Dissections.
3. Institutes of Medicine.	3. Institutes of Medicine.	3. Chemistry.
4. Surgery.	4. Surgery.	4. Practical Chemistry.
5. Practice of Medicine.	5. Practice of Medicine.	6. Surgery, Materia Medica and Pharmacy.
6. Materia Medica.	6. Materia Medica.	7. Practical Pharmacy.
7. Midwifery, and the diseases of Women and Children.	7. Midwifery.	8. Practice of Medicine.
8. Botany.	8. Botany.	9. Midwifery. & Diseases of Women and Children.
9. General Pathology.	9. Attendance at an Infirmary for 12 months.	10. Hospital Attendance, 27 Months.
10. Practical Anatomy.		
11. Clinical Medicine.		
12. Clinical Surgery.		
13. Medical Jurisprudence.		
14. Natural History, including Zoology.		
15. Attendance at an Hospital for 6 months, in addition to, and in a separate year from that which is implied in the attendance on Clinical Medicine, (No. 11.)		
16. Attendance for at least 6 months, as an apprentice or otherwise in compounding Drugs.		
17. Attendance for at least 6 months on the OUT practice of an Hospital or Dispensary, or that of a Physician, Surgeon, or Member of the London or Dublin Society of Apothecaries.		

"This great difference between the Curricula of the two Universities, has for several years had the effect of inducing a comparatively greater number of Students to take the degree of the Glasgow University in preference to that of Edinburgh, the privileges conferred by both being equal; so that the attendance at Glasgow has increased, while the attendance at Edinburgh has diminished,—which your Memorialists regret to say, has assumed a very serious aspect since November, 1832, as will be seen from the following statement:—

	Number of Students attending the University of Edinburgh.		Number of Graduates in Medicine in the University of Glasgow.
Average of five years, ending with Session commencing in November, 1826, ...	846	..	18
Average of five years, ending with Session commencing in November, 1831, ...	842	..	35
Year commencing November, 1832,.....	824	..	48
Year commencing November, 1833,.....	718	..	59
Year commencing November, 1834,.....	703	..	78
Year commencing November, 1835,.....	680	..	79
Year commencing November, 1836,.....	623	..	101

"It appears from the above statement, that since November, 1831, the *decrease in attendance* at the University of Edinburgh has been from 842 to 623, or 26 per cent., while during the same period the *increase* in the number of *graduations* in the University of Glasgow has been from 35 to 101, or nearly 200 per cent.

In the text, page 15, I have endeavoured to do justice to the extraordinary merits of the Edinburgh Royal College of Surgeons, as a Licensing Board. Annexed will be found the Curriculum prescribed by that Body, with some preliminary observations illustrative of the admirable spirit by which it is animated.

"Surgeons' Hall, Edinburgh,
1st November, 1844.

"The Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh, in revising, from time to time, their regulations respecting the course of study to be followed by Candidates for their Diploma, have been uniformly anxious to extend and improve the education of those who receive that testimonial of qualification, so as more effectually to secure their being competent to perform their professional duties with credit to themselves and advantage to the public."

"It will be obvious to all who consider the extended and complicated nature of Medical Science, that much of the success of the student, in the prosecution of its various branches, must depend upon the previous cultivation of his mental faculties; and that it is consequently of the utmost importance, both as regards the interest of the public, and the future comfort and respectability of the practitioner, that all who apply to the study of Surgery should have previously received a liberal education. The College have enacted some regulations for

securing this object; and they confidently trust that Medical Practitioners in every part of the country will be disposed to second their endeavours, by recommending to the young men who may be placed under their care, or who may apply to them for advice, the study of the *Latin*, *Greek*, *French*, *German*, and *Italian Languages:* and of *Logic*, *Mathematics*, and *Natural Philosophy;* as the best preparative for entering upon a course of medical and surgical education. And they would strongly urge their own Fellows, as well as all other practitioners, not to take any young man as an apprentice until he shall have gone through such a preliminary course."

COURSE OF STUDY.

1. *Preliminary Instruction.*—Every candidate for the Diploma of the Royal College must, either previously to or during his medical education, have received regular instruction in the *Elements of Mathematics;* and must have subsequently attended a course of *Mechanical Philosophy* of at least *three* months' duration, and of not fewer than sixty lectures."

2. *Professional Instruction.*—The Candidate must have been engaged in attending the following *separate* and *distinct* courses of lectures during a period of three Winter Sessions of six months duration each at least.

		Duration at least
Anatomy, ...	2 Courses,	Six Months each.
Practical Anatomy, ...		Twelve Months.
Chemistry, ...	1 Do.	Six Months.
Practical Chemistry, ... The number of Pupils in each Class being limited to 25,	1 Do.	Three Months.
Materia Medica and Pharmacy, ..	1 Ditto.	Six Months.
Practical Pharmacy,*	1 Ditto.	Six Months.
Institutions of Medicine or Physiology,	1 Ditto.	Six Months.
Practice of Medicine	1 Ditto.	Six Months.
Clinical Medicine,§ ..	1 Ditto. or 2 Courses.	Six Months. Three Months each; during the period of his attendance at the Hospital where they are delivered.

* This is required of every Candidate who does not produce a Certificate of having been, for the space of at least two years, the private Pupil or Apprentice of a regularly licensed Medical Practitioner, keeping a Laboratory for the dispensing of Medicines. It must be attended at the Laboratory of a Surgeon or Apothecary; or of a Chemist and Druggist recognized by the College on special application; or of a Public Hospital or Dispensary; and the Candidate must produce evidence that he has been engaged in compounding and dispensing Medicines.

§ Clinical Medicine and Clinical Surgery must not be attended at the same time.

Principles and Practice of Surgery,..	2 Courses,	Six Months each.
Or { Principles and Practice of Surgery, .. and Military Surgery,†	1 Course, 1 Do.	Six Months each.
Clinical Surgery.§ ...	1 Course, or 2 Courses,	Six Months. Three Months each; during the period of his attendance at the Hospital where they are delivered.
Midwifery and Diseases of Women and Children, ..	1 Course,	Three Months.
Medical Jurisprudence, ...	1 Do.	Three Months.

The Candidate must also have attended, for twenty-one months, a Public General Hospital, containing at least eighty beds.¶

Whilst these pages were passing through the press, I have learned that the Medical Faculties of the University, and King's College, London, have, jointly, presented a Petition to the House of Commons, in reference to the Physic and Surgery Bill, which displays feelings towards the Uuiversity of Edinburgh, and towards the Royal Colleges of Physicians and Surgeons of that City, very inconsistent with the idea I had formed of the liberality of the Professors of these London establishments. No rational, intelligent man can misunderstand the motives which have prompted the said Petition.

It may, according to the Professors of the London Colleges, be confidently said, that in London, there are materials for constructing ten or twelve such Bodies as the Colleges of Physicians, and Surgeons of Edinburgh. And in every town of England of the same size, in which the population is equal, Colleges might be formed, as well entitled to public confidence, as those of Edinburgh.

The utter absurdity, to say the least of it, of such an assertion, it were a work of supererogation indeed to demonstrate, and I shall only add, that, estimating the value of Colleges by the services they render to the community, and to science, it may fairly be doubted, if in London itself, materials exist, or at least if they could be amalgamated, to construct more than two such Bodies as those in Edinburgh, which the

† The course of Military Surgery must be delivered by a Professor of that branch in a University; or by a Lecturer who, in addition to the other requisite qualifications, has served in the Medical Department of the Army or Navy; and the course must be of at least six months' duration, and comprehend not fewer than sixty lectures.

¶ By this mode of expression the College mean it to be understood that the average number of patients under treatment in such Hospital shall not be less than eighty.

Medical Faculties of King's, and University College, have though proper to disparage.

The truth is, and upon this occasion it is necessary to state it plainly, the ungenerous attack, for it is such, is merely a repetition of one made by certain Members of the Court of Examiners of the London Apothecaries' Company, when *it* was struggling to establish for itself a name, and a *Status,* in the Medical Commonwealth.

An abridgement of the exposition which refuted the calumnies of those who guided the Counsels of the Apothecaries' Company at the period refered to, is quite sufficient to defeat the joint efforts of the Medical Faculties of the London Colleges, who, at this crisis, evidently desire to aggrandize themselves, at the expence of a Medical School, which, I hesitate not to pronounce amongst the first, if not the very first, in Europe.

"It has been said that Edinburgh has not the means of giving practical instruction, and it is stated that 1000 pupils attend an hospital containing only 250 beds. All the medical students here do not attend the Infirmary during the whole course of their studies. Not more, perhaps, than 350 are attending at the same time, and, besides the Royal Infirmary, containing 380 beds, there are two chartered Dispensaries, affording relief to thousands of patients, in addition to twelve others, less extensive in their operations, one Lying-in-Institution, and four Dispensaries for parturient women. All these are within the reach of the student, and may be attended, on payment of a very moderate fee.

"It is not the extent of the hospital alone, or the number of beds and patients which it contains, that constitutes a good or efficient institution for affording to students the means of instruction in medicine and surgery; neither is it the number of hospitals and dispensaries which any city presents, that renders that city an efficient and useful School of Medicine. It is entirely, we contend, the manner in which the hospital is managed, and the manner in which its medical officers perform the duties of visiting, reporting the cases, aud keeping, or seeing kept, the records of the cases, and lastly, conducting the dissections, and applying them to the purposes of clinical instruction, that renders the hospital good, bad, or indifferent, as places of professional education.

"Now, in this point of view, we maintain, without fear of contradiction by the candid, or the dread of refutation by the well-informed, that the

Edinburgh school of medicine affords, and has afforded, means of practical instruction certainly not equalled by any school in these islands, and we even doubt whether by any on the continent. To what, we beg to ask, has the Edinburgh University owed the high position which she has held, and unrivalled celebrity which she enjoys, as a medical school, ever since her foundation? The question is easily answered by those who know her history; but to all others it is incomprehensible. It is simply this. At the time at which the University of Edinburgh came forward to instruct the intending members of the profession in the elements of medical and surgical knowledge, her teachers did not content themselves with giving systematic instructions on the synthetic plan only.

"It is needless to say that the Professors of the Edinburgh University had their reward. They did not proclaim themselves as the only persons capable of legislating on medical education. They did not come forward to depreciate any attempts made by others to propagate correct views of medicine and surgery, or to facilitate the instruction of the young in the knowledge of these useful and honourable arts. They did not attempt, by misrepresentation where they knew, and arrogance and bold assertion, where they were ignorant, to mislead the public and the Legislature upon their own services, or those of others, in the improvement of medical education, and the elevation of the profession as a liberal and scientific body. They proceeded in a quiet, unobtrusive, but persevering manner, in the business of teaching medicine and surgery on the twofold plan of the synthetic and analytic method, by systematic lectures, and by clinical instruction; and in no long time the merits of the method were so fully recognized, that it was imitated and adopted in almost every celebrated medical school in Europe, with the sole and discreditable exception of that city, which the Society of Apothecaries hold up as affording infinitely better means of acquiring practical information than Edinburgh.*

"At the present moment a larger proportion of cases in the Royal Infirmary is made available to the purpose of clinical instruction, conducted regularly and systematically by daily visits, daily reports, epicritical lectures, and demonstrations in morbid anatomy, than in any other

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* And the Medical Faculties of University and King's College, now, reiterate the claim!
LUCIUS.

hospital in Great Britain of which we are aware. To the purpose of instruction in clinical medicine, eight wards, containing 162 patients, are devoted.

"But it is not in clinical medicine alone that the University of Edinburgh has shown herself foremost, and most anxious to provide ample means of instruction. The medical school of that seminary was not only the first, but, for a long time, the only one in which the principles and practice of surgery were taught by clinical lectures. Lectures on the cases treated and the operations performed, in the surgical wards, were first delivered in the Royal Infirmary by Mr. James Russell; and for above thirty years did this indefatigable surgeon continue to deliver two courses of lectures annually, for the benefit of the students attending the surgical wards. In this duty, he began to receive the assistance of the ordinary surgeons, viz. of Mr. Allan in 1824, and of Sir George Ballingall in 1826—a measure so much the more necessary, that Mr. Russell lectured on cases under the management of the other surgeons, and consequently might have felt himself constrained to speak less freely of the practice pursued than he would have done, had the cases been under his own management. Even this system, however, had its advantages. But as these seemed to be counterbalanced by its disadvantages, upon the appointment of Mr. Syme, as Professor of Clinical Surgery in 1833, a new method was adopted, in the allotment of separate wards for the cases under the management of that gentleman, and which are made the subject of clinical observation for the graduates, or such of the surgical students as chuse. At the same time the ordinary surgeons were authorized to continue the system of teaching surgery by clinical instruction, for the benefit of the pupils of the College of Surgeons. At the present time, of 103 cases under surgical treatment, from 75 to 80 are selected for the purposes of clinical instruction.

"Can any similar example of energy, zeal, and devotion to the cause of medical education be adduced, either in any of the eight hospitals of London, or in any other hospital in Europe? We believe, that of the circumstances of most of these hospitals we are more or less informed; yet we can mention none which can in this respect be compared with the Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh.

"We could easily, by giving a similar account of the principal Dis-

pensaries in Edinburgh, adduce facts equally conclusive as to the advantages afforded by the Edinburgh Institutions, for improving pupils in the practical knowledge of their profession. On this, however, our limits will not permit us to enter, nor is it necessary.

"There is however another way, by which the reader might be shown the qualifications of practitioners sent to England, from the Edinburgh Medical Schools,—namely, the celebrity acquired by such in the scientific world, and in the field of practice.

"It is well known, that practitioners who studied at Edinburgh, are held in the highest estimation over the whole world, in every rank of the profession. If we look to past times, there never has been a physician of eminence in London, but there has been at the same time one of at least equal eminence in Edinburgh. Now that Baillie has disappeared, the comparison still holds good. In pure surgery we are at length treading close on the heels of our metropolitan brethren.* In general or family practitioners we are still far a-head of them, if we abstract that numerous and important class in England, whose education and spirit constitute them properly a part of ourselves. In all the departments of the public service, the pupils of our schools are foremost in place and in renown."

And as mentioned at page 12 of this publication, the most distinguished London Physicians of the present day, studied at Edinburgh, and, no doubt, *there*, acquired much of that professional knowledge, which enables them to perform their important duties, with so much advantage to the community, and honour to themselves.

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* The above was written many years ago. It is not meant as any reflection on the London Surgeons, but the reverse, when I say that, since the period referred to, Edinburgh has equalled, if not excelled London, in pure surgery; and, strange to say, University and King's College are indebted to Edinburgh for three of their present surgical professors! As well known, LISTON, a man of the most consummate skill as a consulting, and dexterity as an operating, surgeon, was bred in Edinburgh, and practised there; until, to enhance its reputation as a surgical school, those interested in the prosperity of the London University College offered him a professorship, in that Seminary, in 1834. They have since placed a SECOND Edinburgh surgeon, in another of its chairs; and KING'S College, a few years ago, standing in want of a professor to teach the principles and practice of surgery, deemed it expedient to send to Edinburgh for the present possessor of that chair! Moreover, Dr. Tweedie, one of the Faculty of the London University—an examiner of candidates for medical degrees, is an Edinburgh trained man, and a fellow of its College of SURGEONS! With a knowledge of these facts, I leave it to those concerned to form an opinion of the propriety of the petition presented to the House of Commons, by University and King's Colleges, London.

The design of the Petition presented to the House of Commons by University and King's College, so far as I have deprecated it, is inconsistent with all sound medical legislation,—the object of which should be, not the aggrandizement of the profession, much less that of any particular School or City,—but the welfare of the public, insisted on by all right-minded Physicians, and patriotic Statesmen.

In conclusion, I beg to quote the following extract, from an introductory lecture, delivered by a late acute physician, at the opening of the Argyle Square Medical School, Edinburgh, in 1836, which contains a much more accurate report of the Medical capabilities of the Northern Metropolis, (which has not inaptly been styled the Modern Athens,) than that made to the House of Commons, by the Medical Faculties of University and King's Colleges.

"Edinburgh has been long and justly celebrated as a seat of learning, but more especially as a Medical School; and while other cities boast of their rich manufactories, Edinburgh proudly claims the credit of being a great manufactory for improving the mind. It affords a remarkable example, rare in these times, of a large city continuing in a state of prosperity, without the aid of ordinary manufactures or commerce.

"As a School of Medicine, Edinburgh need not fear a comparison with other cities; none can boast of a situation so healthy,—of surrounding country of equal beauty, or so rich in botanical or geological productions,—of libraries of equal extent, or museums stored with such an abundant variety of preparations, open at all times to students,—of so large a portion of society devoted to literary or scientific pursuits,—of a more zealous body of teachers, or of courses of lectures of equal extent or duration.

"It may perhaps be said that London excels Edinburgh in the *number* of its schools and teachers, although it may fall short of it in other respects; but we must look upon London, not as possessing one great School,* every part of which is at once accessible to the student, but as consisting of numerous, and for the most part small schools, so separated from each other, that in as far as regards the student, they might as well be placed at the opposite extremities of the Empire; hence there does not exist among the teachers in London that great degree of wholesome stimulus arising from *direct* competition which here prevails, and which is productive of such important benefits both to the teacher and the student; neither has the student the same choice of teachers in every department of the profession.

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* As that of the University, and the extra-academical School at Edinburgh may be said to be.
L.

The pressure of other business having occasioned delay in bringing forward the Medical Bill, in the House of Commons, I am enabled to add a few remarks on the present state of the case, founded on personal observation made in London, on the 9th and 10th of June. It appears to me that some Hon. Members are too much disposed to be guided by the wishes of their Constituents, in this great national question. I would respectfully remind such Senators, that the *merits* of the question are a better guide than the *wishes* of Constituents, who have acted on the advice given by the *Times*, as to "inoculating such Members as fell in their way, with a '*virus*,' to prevent Sir James Graham's Bill from ever becoming law." "*Salus populi lex est suprema*," as insisted on fully, in the foregoing pages.

Mr. Wakley is continuing to labour in *his* calling, and is supported by a party, which, in point of moral and professional influence, is as dust in the balance, when weighed against those to which it is opposed.

The great bulk of the Association of General Practitioners, so far as I can perceive, continue to act a part characterized by prudence and moderation. The Committee seems sensitively alive to the interests of the Association. Too much so, I humbly conceive, in some points, inasmuch as its members appear, occasionally, to lose sight of the primary principle of all legislation, to secure a firm footing for their order. Under the management of the committe, the interests of the General Practitioners of England will, I conceive, be infinitely more safe than under that of the radical Mr. Wakley, and *his clique*.

Of the various objections made to certain clauses of Sir James Graham's Medical Bill, I only deem it necessary to notice three—

First, clause 16, by which it is proposed "to allow General Practitioners who shall have attained the age of forty years, and who shall have practised medicine for at least twelve years," to be candidates for the highest honours in medicine, without further education than that they received to qualify them as General Practitioners. The clause referred to is defended on the ground, (to use the words of a London Surgeon Apothecary of high respectability,) that "*time* and *bed-side* practice are equivalents for the training to which the pure physician is to be subjected"—that, in fact, in the way mentioned, "the General Practitioner gives a *quid pro quo*,"—in other words, that professional experience and age are "equivalents" for scholastic education.

The objection just noticed is, I conceive, a valid one. The mere physician is a character required to support the dignity, and literary reputation of the profession, and to improve its science. Sound and enlightened policy, therefore, requires that his education should be far above that of the General Practitioner, even when that is fixed at a high standard.

The second objection, to which I referred, is in regard to the *preliminary* examination proposed to be insisted on *in England,* only, clause 17th of the Bill. That objection is not entitled to much consideration, since there is no occasion for a *preliminary* examination, elswhere, as might easily be shewn. But if, in regard to this matter, the Legislature deem it expedient to put the three divisions of the empire on the same footing, the Scotch and Irish Colleges will, I suppose, readily agree to such an arrangement.

The third objection I alluded to is *that* made by the chemists and druggists, in a petition to the House of Commons, viz. that, by clause 36 of the Bill, they will be prevented from prescribing, as Apothecaries. Although no advocate for granting monopolising privileges to any branch of the profession, I would be sorry to see that restriction removed, since, in reality, it is a salutary restriction. No respectable druggist ventures to treat a serious medical case, but mischief, unquestionably, often results from that being done by unscrupulous medicine venders. As a check on such, the provision adverted to should, I conceive, remain.

The Editor of the *Medical Times* concludes his leading article in last Saturday's number in these words :—

" Let the General Practitioners support his (Sir James Graham's) amendments and he will make small work of Wakley. As well set a brawny pugilist against the accomplished master of the rapier. But will the General Practitioners stand by the Minister? Will they reward the industry—the amenity—the good disposition—the readiness to concede—which, taken altogether, he has largely shown in their service? This is the problem yet to be solved. Our opinion is, that the General Practitioners, feeling that he has come into their terms quite as far as we may reasonably expect that, in *one* law any *successful* legislator can, will rally round him, and—a few details apart—triumphantly carry the Bill."

I repeat my solemn conviction, that, for the interest of the public, and the rational part of the profession, Sir James Graham ought to do so, whether the General Practitioners rally round him or not. That a vast majority are disposed to rally round the Minister, however,

will, I trust be evident, forthwith.

The idea seems to be gaining ground—and it is encouraged by the enemies of the Bill—that Sir James Graham will "throw up" the cause of Medical Reform in disgust. The Right Honourable Baronet has, doubtless, had too much reason to be shocked with much he has seen, and been compelled to endure from the selfishness, and narrow-minded propensities of members of the medical profession, with whom individually, and corporately, as a medical reformer, he has had occasion to hold intercourse. But, all intelligent, and *disinterested* members of the profession are fully sensible of the obligations they owe to his indefatigable efforts, to improve their condition; and sure am I, that I express the sentiments of such, when I presume to implore Sir James Graham, not to abandon his position as a leading Medical Legislator. The public and the profession are deeply interested in *his* continuing to watch over their concerns.

The great imperfections of our medical polity have been so clearly exposed, that an attempt to improve it must be made. No one in existence is so competent to achieve that *desideratum*, as the Statesman who has devoted much time and attention to the subject. Sir James Graham may with peculiar propriety exclaim to his opponents, in the words of Diogenes Laertius, as translated by Dr. Johnson,

> "Begone, ye blockheads, *Heraclitus* cries,
> And leave my labours to the learn'd and wise."

ERRATA.

Page 25, Foot Note, fifth line, for *consequenty*, read *consequently.*
—— 27, dele inverted commas from *first* and *twelve* succeeding paragraphs.
—— 30, line 5, for *Saturday last*, read *Saturday, November* 2, 1844.
—— 41, line 17, for *inbibe*, read *imbibe.*
—— 41, line 23, for *arrangment*, read *arrangements.*
—— 43, line 2, for *acadmeical*, read *academical.*
—— 43, line 25, for *error was*, read *error, one.*
—— 50, line 1, for *though*, read *thought.*
—— 54, line 5, for *insisted*, read *as insisted.*